THE BIG AIIIEEEEE!

An Anthology of Chinese American and Japanese American Literature

MERIDIAN

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THE BIG AIIIEEEEE!

matters that twenty-two thousand Nikkei were fingered and counted by the JACL and the government as resisters. It matters that the number was more than ten times the entire wartime JACL membership of eighteen hundred. It matters that Fa Mulan was not tattooed. It matters that the Chinese and Japanese immigrants came as settlers and established the tongs and tanemoshi, Chung Wah Wooey Goon and Nikkei Jinkai, as permanent institutions. It matters that Spaniards and Basques really mingled with the Chinese in San Francisco. It matters that all the Chinese and Japanese American writers in this book, no matter what they believe or what literary form they favor, make the difference between the real and the fake. It matters that the Asian American writers here are not—with one exception—yellow engineers of the stereotype. The pleasures of these works do not depend on the reader's ignorance of the real. It matters.

San Francisco. Chinatown–North Beach. Tonight. What holds the Asian Americas together, right now, at about half past dead? Aiiieeeee!

Wong Sam and Assistants

Who was Wong Sam? Who were his assistants? We don't know. We don't know how they convinced Wells, Fargo to print and distribute the bilingual *An English-Chinese Phrase Book* in its 130 offices throughout the West in towns where Chinamen lived and worked. We do know that whoever he was, Wong Sam revised the 1875 edition two years later, and Wells, Fargo published and distributed this larger version of the *Phrase Book* in more than two hundred towns with Chinese American populations.

This is not the kind of phrase book used alphabetically by subject. The Chinese learn writing, painting, philosophy, martial arts through a process of memorization, recitation, and internalization of specific "sets." In the *Phrase Book,* the sets contain strategy and tactics for business and criminal law, and for dealing with white people in general. These sets are "fast," unlike those of *The Analects* of Confucius, which take years—a lifetime—to internalize. No, these sets are meant to be memorized quickly, fun to recite, and internalized by the time a Chinaman has his first experience with a white man.

Try these phrases out loud with a different voice for every other line, and it will be instantly apparent that Wong Sam and Assistants' tactics and strategy for dealing with the white man's application of the law do not include submission, acculturation, and assimilation. The Christian prayers found at the back of the *Phrase Book* are themselves a strategy for raising money to publish the book.

Eighteen seventy-five.

Rye Patch, Nevada. Salem, Oregon. Sierra City, California. You have to do business. Get from one place to another, buy clothes, secure licenses. Have an answer for the cops when they ask why your friend is dead on your doorstep. Read these sets. Memorize them. Recite them. Free-associate with them, riff with them and discover how they work. Internalize them until all the phrases are instinct. Wong Sam and his assistants compiled a book of phrases that prepared the Chinese for any situation, anywhere in the American West. The *Phrase Book* is that set. Free! At any Wells, Fargo office.

An English-Chinese Phrase Book

你有乜貨物出賣
What goods have you for sale?

樣樣都有
I have all kinds.

我想買條好褲
I want to get a pair of your best pants.

你愛點樣價銀
What do you ask for them?

你能減少些
Can you take less for them?

先生　不能
I cannot, sir.

汝還有好過汝樣麼
Have you any other kind better than these?

汝肯賣賒款麼
Will you sell on credit?

我賣現銀　先生
No sir, I sell for cash.

倘汝俾好貨過我　我時時與汝交易
I will come to deal with you always if you give me the best kinds (quality).

為何咁貴
How is it that it is so dear?

煩汝與我交易
Please give me your custom.

好貨稅餉太重　另値我本銀十元
Well, sir, it costs us $10, and besides we have to pay very heavy duty on our best goods.

好生意
Is business good?

甚好　多謝
Very well, I thank you.

買客甚少
The buyers are very few.

生意焉能興旺
How can the business be prosperous!

有人缺本
Some men lose capital.

有人賺銀
Some men get profits.

價銀太高
The price is too high.

我唔能俾得咁多
I am not able to pay.

我賣甚公平
I sell very justly.

孩子我都不騙
I don't cheat, even a boy.

自然係真
Certainly, it is true.

賣客甚多
The sellers are too many.

價錢憑貨物
The price depends on the goods.

佢應當對面講
He ought to speak face to face.

倘若我愛物我再回來
If I want anything I will call on you again.

吩付攔阻
In order to prevent.

貨物頂好
The goods are first-class.

乜價錢嗎
What is the price?

價錢係真
And the price is fixed.

四元銀一叫順
Four dollars per dozen.

先驗明貨正買
Examine the goods before you buy.

我必先說汝知
I must tell you before.

我有時買來平
Sometimes I bought them cheap.

有時我平賣
Sometimes I sold them cheap.

我如今照市價賣
Now I sell them at market prices.

自然係真實
Certainly, it is true.

因讀稅餉太重
Because the duty is too heavy.

買賣甚艱難
To buy and sell is very difficult.

有時我買得貴
Sometimes I buy them dear.

因此我賣亦貴
Of course I must sell them dear.

我一樣價錢賣
I sell them at one price.

中意咁多就買咁多
Buy as many as you like.

你要價錢高
You ask too high a price.

唔係價高　先生
It is not dear, sir.

不防我騙汝
Don't fear I am cheating you.

我有鞋帽衣服
I also have clothes, shoes and caps.

你肯俾我看麼
Can you let me see them?

倘你如意看就看　此物不是好得
If you like to see, you might see, they are not very good.

你肯賣平些
Can you sell it cheaper?

你愛幾多
How much do you want?

我如今無
I have none now.

俾貨我看過
Show me some goods.

汝愛幾多銀
What do you charge for it?

乜誰命汝來
Who sent you here for it?

我唔相信汝
I cannot trust you.

我下禮拜俾汝
I shall pay you next week.

我望汝相信我
I hope you will trust me.

我防汝走去
I fear you will run away.

為何汝唔買
Why don't you buy them?

我明日來取
I will come for them to-morrow.

信道理捱欺
Christians bear great trials.

佢强搶我物
He took it from me by violence.

我無意打佢
I struck him accidentally.

我認唔該佢還想來打我
I have made an apology, but still he wants to strike me.

佢無事打我
He assaulted me without provocation.

我賃汝樓要汝包水
I will rent the house if you include the water.

你肯去我包汝回
I Guarantee to bring him back, if he will go.

此人欲搊工銀
The men are striking for wages.

我身分足用
I am content with my situation.

你同佢鬬款
You contend with him about the account.

裝滿箱蘋果
The box contains apples.

佢詐病
He feigned to be sick.

女人暈倒在會堂
The lady fainted in church.

佢誓了願
He ended what he said with an oath.

此樓無意燒了
The house was burned by accident.

此樓有意燒了
The house was set on fire by an incendiary.

佢想白認我行李
He tried to obtain my baggage by false pretenses.

佢强搶我泥口
He claimed my mine.

佢强霸我地
He squatted on my lot.

倘佢唔走我定然逐佢出去
I will expel him if he don't leave the place.

幾時滿期
When will the lease expire?

你幾時滿號
When is the expiration of you lease?

我下禮拜四滿號
Next Thursday my month will have expired.

昨日我工滿號一月
Yesterday was the expiration of one month of labor.

我下禮拜四滿號
My month will have expired on Thursday next.

佢簽名于紙上
He indorsed the note.

佢做我認頭
He went my security.

你肯誓願麼
Can you swear to that.

佢誓了願
He has sworn already.

佢誓願幾次
He swore several times.

我保佢前後
I guarantee him back and fore.

我包個樓係好個
I warranted the house to be a good one.

佢在審事堂誓假願
He perjured himself in Court.

佢在衙門誓願官府廳
He gave his oath to the judge in Court.

佢誓假願
He was fined for perjury.

佢託名捉拿
He was arrested for forgery.

倘有村料我可做工之于汝
If you find the materials I will furnish laborers.

倘汝唔賠我定劫汝家物
I will attach his furniture if you idemnify me.

倘若滿號汝無俾我定然封汝舖之契
I will close the mortgage on your store if you don't pay me when the time has expired.

我定封汝舖之契若滿號無艮俾
I will close the mortgage on your store if you don't pay me when the time has expired.

佢逼勒我可銀
He tries to extort money from me.

汝去假託逼勒佢照（招）
They are going to extort a confession from him by false pretensions.

逼佢招出
The confession was extorted from him by force.

唬怕勒逼佢招認罪
The confessions were extorted from them by threats

我保佢出監
I bailed him out of jail.

我捅水上船
I bailed the water out of the boat.

佢一仟五佰銀保單
He gave bonds for $1,500.

佢案情昨日十點鐘開審
His case was tried yesterday at 10 A. M.

官府定然定罪于過
The judge will certainly convict him.

佢受大頭人定佢罪
He was convicted by the jury.

佢如今定罪
He is now a convict.

佢取人來見証係真
He brought a man to prove the fact.

人曰我講所見之事
The man said: "I will testify what I saw."

佢口供已經信了
His testimony was believed.

佢搾治汝工艮
He will retain your wages.

佢騙了我之工艮
He cheated me out of my wages.

佢誆騙東家
He swindled his employer.

佢騙了我斯文銀
He defrauded me out of my salary.

案情昨日罷了
The case was ended yesterday.

後回審定了罪
He was found guilty, by the last trial.

決命佢去做十年苦工
He will be sent to the penitentiary for 10 years.

佢已經命去省監
He has been sent to the State Prison.

佢誣告我偷鏢
He falsely accused me of stealing his watch.

汝犯了國法
You have violated the Constitution of this State.

他眠埋伏之地
They were lying in ambush.

佢被誤殺
He came to his death by homicide.

佢被夜盜謀殺
He was murdered by a thief.

佢犯罪自儘
He committed suicide.

佢受賊人用繩索索死
He was choked to death with a lasso, by a robber.

佢受人縊死
He was strangled to death by a man.

佢飢死在監
He was starved to death in prison.

佢在霜冷死
He was frozen to death in the snow.

佢在灣投水死
He was going to drown himself in the bay.

後尋數日捉治兇手
After searching for several days they caught the murderer.

汝明得係真實
Did they find anything in his possession.

也有
They did.

佢受人陰殺
He was killed by an assassin.

佢想陰害我
He tried to assassinate me.

佢想陰殺我
He tried to kill me by assassination.

佢係功打之人
He is an assaulter.

佢在房淹死
He was smothered in his room.

佢捫死在房裡
He was suffocated in his room.

佢受仇人用炮打死
He was shot dead by his enemy.

佢受朋友用藥道死
He was poisoned to death by his friend.

佢想用藥道死
He tries to kill him by poisoning.

佢加刑死在監
He tries to inflict death by poison.

立意攻擊禍害肉身
Assault with the intention to do bodily injury.

佢手拈規例
He took the law in his own hand.

佢想奪去我位
He tried to deprive me of my situation.

佢不義搶去我工銀
He wrongfully deprived me of my wages.

我夜間回家
I go home at night.

我也回家
I have gone home.

我去歸
I went home.

我在家住
I abide at home.

我在大埠住
I abode at San Francisco.

我也曾在屋崙住
I have lived in Oakland.

我日出起身
I arise at sunrise.

我今早四點鐘起身
I arose this morning at 4 o'clock.

我有時上晝三點起身
I have arisen at 3 A. M. some mornings.

我四點鐘醒
I awake at 4 o'clock.

我今早五點鐘醒
I awoke this morning at 5 o'clock.

我有時七點鐘醒
I awaken at 7 A. M. sometimes.

我七點鐘開工
I begin work at 7 A. M.

我上晝八點鐘開工
You began work at 8 A. M.

我六點鐘開工
We have begun work at 6 A. M.

我綁起此麥
We bind the wheat up.

我綁治個瘡
We bound up the wound.

我用鐵鍊綁治個孩子
We have bound that boy with a chain.

汝毀了窗門
You break windows.

我毀了刀
I broke my knife.

他毀了國法
They have broken the laws of the State.

去佢下水
Cast him into the water.

我捉個人入監今日
We cast a man into p[rison to-day.

人他放出去
They have cast the man out.

斬柴過個人
You cut wood for the man.

佢無意斬了隻手
He cut a man's hand off by an accident.

我斬倒此樹
We have cut the tree down.

乃日汝得順便到來
What day is the most convenient for you to come?

汝幾時順便到此處
What day is the most convenient for you to be here?

汝乃日便到位
What day is the most convenient for you to be present?

乜日汝到來
What day can you come?

乃日汝如意來拜見
What day is the best time for you to call?

幾時汝有好機會到此
What day is the best chance for you to get here?

汝定乜日到來
What certain day can you arrive?

乃日汝可能起程
On what day is it possible for you to depart?

乃日汝著便起程
What will be the most suitable day for you to start?

乃日汝可能放落工夫
At what day can you leave the work?

乃日汝可能離開事業
At what day can you get away from your avocation?

乃日汝能淂去
What day can you get away?

我唔估到汝來此處
I did not think that you would come here.

我唔曾望汝到此
I did not expect that you would be here.

我唔估汝肯來
I did not suppose that you would come.

我唔知汝願來
I did not know that you would come.

我唔估汝想來
I never thought that you would come.

我唔估汝到來
I have not been expecting you.

我唔估係汝
I could not think it were you

你驚揚於我
You have taken me by surprise.

我並無等候見汝
Well! I never expected to see you.

汝可能來淂
Is it possible that you have come?

順便來見
Call in when convenient.

不過係順便來拜見
I call in because it is convenient.

我因為淂閒到來
I came because I had an opportunity.

我因為順便到來
I came because it was convenient.

一有便處我就到來
I came at the first opportunity.

我因方便到來
My convenience caused me to come.

我中意來
It suits me to come.

因合宜我來
There is an appropriateness in my coming.

我合宜到來
There is a fitness in my coming.

我因朋友唔來我就來
I came because my friend did not come.

我咁樣做因為我中意
I do so because I love to.

我來因我有個好機會
I came for I had a splendid chance.

我來因我有好機會
I came for I had a good chance.

我估我過時就入來
Well! I thought I would drop in while passing.

我估我行過之時順便入來見
Well! I thought I would make a visit while passing.

我估庭昔過此地
Well! I thought I would step in while passing by here.

我估我會庭一時之久
Well! I thought I would step in for a moment.

我來因我有淂閒
Oh! I came because my time was not occupied.

我來因我在家無工夫做
Oh! I came because I had nothing to do at home.

我方便因此我來
The commodiousness of the cars enabled me to come conveniently.

你要乜野呀先生
Well, sir! what will you have?

好呀先生我幫汝做乜野
Well, sir! what can I do for you?

你想愛乜野先生
Well, sir! what do you wish?

尊駕汝要乜呀
Well, sir! what do you want?

你想買乜野先生
Well, sir! what do you want to buy?

一擔貨過崙屋每日來回
汝要幾多艮一個月
What will be the charges per month for a vegetable dealer and his two baskets to Oakland and return, daily?

我買汝貨我要汝送到我處
I buy goods from you, I want you to deliver them to my place.

連箱借與我明日送回汝
Lend to me, with the box too, I will return it to you to-morrow.

我要汝包我出入費用
I want you to pay all my fare of coming and going.

你嫌我貨價錢貴因此汝唔買
You dislike my goods because it is so dear, and you don't buy.

等幾日然後講汝知
Wait for a few days, then I will tell you.

汝幾時齊備
When will you be ready?

汝肯相信我
Will you trust me?

佢係拐帶之人
He is a kidnapper.

佢係我書管學生頭
He is a monitor in our school.

放牛乳油入碗櫃
Put the butter in the cupboard.

倒白糖出來牛乳盤
Empty the sugar into the milk-pan.

汝愛我幫汝
You want me to help you?

佢內外病症
He is sick in mind and body.

佢心算度即如他手做工咁辛苦
He is performing hard mental as well as physical labor.

留住他一禮拜工艮等佢在此長做
I keep back a week's wages in order to secure his stay.

多煩汝俾回我汝所留住之工艮
Please give me now that portion of my wages which you have withheld from me.

耶穌係我中保
Christ is our mediator.

我高過佢
I am taller than he.

每間店鋪有一個出番之人能說英話
There is not a store which has not an interpreter -- one who can speak the English language.

我問他知到乃一間唐鋪
冇一兩個能說英話
I asked them if they ever knew a Chinese store in San Francisco without one or more who could speak English.

我問他知到乃一間鋪冇
一兩個能講英話
I asked them if they knew of a store without one or more who could speak English.

中市人做得好過佢
Mr. Jones can do better than he.

佢欲強逼我
He wants to force me (compel).

我唔估到咁樣的
I didn't think it would cause such trouble.

或者佢做了
He might have cone it.

我們有長久審問
We will have a long investigation.

未曾伴段
It is not decided yet.

你自捉治佢或是汝查出
佢
Did you catch him yourself, or find out by inquiry?

汝有乜憑據足意來定
佢罪
Did you find any proof sufficient to convict him.

佢們尋出些物件在佢家
業之中
They searched and found something in his possession.

我唔知定是否
I did not know if it were certain or not.

我唔明白此件事情
I don't understand the whole affair.

若有乜撞板或偶然之事
我必來汝處
In case of failure or any accident I will come to you.

你可能擔帶此案情
Can you be responsible for the case?

汝冇受別人話
You don't accept others' information.

汝唔怕公義
Do you not care for justice?

你做事無好緣故
You do things without a just cause.

與我打合紅
Make a contract with me.

但汝記得通知我自然唔
遲
When you think of it inform me, so I will not be late.

准延遲些
Allow me a little longer time.

此人貪心
This person is covetous.

佢係唔自在
He is indisposed.

佢連累我
He implicates me.

佢禁監整路做苦工
He was imprisoned, with hard labor on the road.

佢在街上被鞭打了兩次
He was flogged publicly twice in the streets.

佢想走脫刑罰
He tries to escape from his punishment.

汝貴叫乜姓
What is your honorable surname?

我小姓黃
My humble surname is Wong.

我先聽唔見
I cannot hear you first.

汝能等遲幾日
Can you wait a few days longer?

汝要我俾汝定銀嗎
Do you want me to pay you in advance?

若然汝敢就做
Do, if you dare.

我唔怕汝
I don't fear you.

你估汝可能壓得住我
You think you can get the best of me?

佢暗算來佔人之工
He strives to underwork one's situation.

我一生唔曾做過咁事
I never did so in my life.

我即係汝使我咁做
I will do just as you tell me.

佢好小心人
He minds very well.

若佢依從咁樣做佢中意
在此幾奈都得
If he does as I want him to he can stay here as long as he likes.

佢能做起我工夫我必加
些工艮
I will increase his wages when he is able to do all my work.

煩汝體固至緊
Please look out for him by all means.

我與佢買來
I bought it of him.

佢後來反口又要取多些添
He afterward backed down from his promise and asked more for it.

望汝下晝相饒我待我拈
信去信館
I want you to excuse me this afternoon, so I can carry my letter to the post-office.

我上晝有些緊要事望汝
相饒我
I would like to have you excuse me this forenoon, for I have some very important business to do for myself.

我包汝無事
I guarantee that you will have no trouble.

此乃係佢無容私疑
I have no doubt that it was he (not him).

不勞其力
I won't trouble him.

我係寨主
Me as one of the stockholders.

我係伴人
Me as a partner.

此正埠係興盛埠
San Francisco is a prosperous city.

華哩河是個興旺邑
Vallejo was a flourishing town.

還回此款尾
Pay the balance of the account.

永不改事業
Permanent employment.

佢有恆久身分
He has a permanent situation

我暫時做住 任
I have a temporary situation.

我去勸開他們相打
I went and separated them while fighting.

我勸開之後佢被捉入衙門
Both of them were arrested after I had separated them.

他們照例罰
They were fined according to the law.

放工
Dismissed from work.

煩賜我平安
Please have a regard for my welfare.

佢係假認高才之人
He is a pedantic man.

佢係多事之人
He is an officious person.

人叫佢做假認高才者
People call him a pedant.

滿城人知他是假認高才者
He is known by the whole city as a pedant.

無私疑佢係假冒者
There is no need to doubt that he is the forger.

他們打爛窗門被捉
They were arrested for breaking the window.

此個係假冒之人
One of them was a forger.

汝未滿期切不可去
You must never go off without leave.

我滿號定然辭別
I will leave you when my month is up.

火船明日開身
The steamer will leave to-morrow.

由得他至下個禮拜
Leave it until next week.

我憎趕火車唔到
I hate to miss the train.

我防不色書
I fear to miss my lesson.

我唔失得至回家去
I did not miss it until got home.

馬利遲到
Miss Mary was late.

我用石打他但打不中
I tried to hit it with a stone, but missed it.

幾時放學呀
What time will the school be dismissed?

我想早來但我朋友來因此轉回
I would have come very soon, but my friend came and kept me back.

因此我唔能來得早
On that account I did not come until now.

我見汝意思如此
I see that your opinion is so.

佢好羞恥
He was much disgraced.

汝務要早日報知
You must notify me sooner.

為何汝唔中意佢
Why did you dislike him?

乜汝唔中意佢
What did you dislike in him?

我自己定奪
I will form my own conclusion.

我自己判斷
I will decide for myself.

我務要体過佢做成否
I must see if it can't be done successfully.

我唔該
I beg your pardon.

煩汝相饒我
Please excuse me.

我無意做出
I did it accidentally.

佢推我過你處
He pushed me againtst you.

我冇難為佢
I did not tease him (plague).

佢先得罪我
He insulted me first.

此乃刻薄人
It was ill treatment.

倘若我唔告訴汝汝實係唔知
If I did not inform you, you would not know.

汝估此係真實
You thought it was true (actually so).

汝無路可報仇
Have you no way to take revenge?

案情
The case.

佢欠我銀唔肯還
He refused to pay the money which he owes me.

我今無工做煩汝有工舉薦我
I am now out of employment, and if you hear of a place, please recommend me.

汝打合紅請我倘汝唔中意就辭莫打
You have made an agreement to hire me, but if you find that I am not suitable you can discharge me, only you must not strike me.

倘若我買汝物我要汝送到我處
If I buy of you, you must send the articles to me.

我會做汝有乜工夫俾我拈回做
I understand how to work. Have you any work for me to take home to do?

兵人保護他營寨
The soldier will keep guard over our camp.

佢若無保護唔敢回家
He won't dare to go home without a guard.

花旗國内有許多人別國來做工
The United States contain a great many immigrants.

近日有二千別國做工之人離別大埠
About two thousand emigrants left San Francisco lately.

自從相殺過之今有許多人來北邊花旗做工
The immigration from Europe to New England has been very large since the war was over.

別國來做工之人不久冇來了
The immigration will soon be stopped.

加重刑罰于佢倘若佢唔實說
- They were going to inflict a severe punishment upon him if he had not told the truth.

星之光反照在日頭來
The stars reflect the rays of the sun.

我甚煩悶時時回想我之事
I feel sorry whenever I reflect upon that matter.

聲音引動我甚
The tonic affects me very much.

佢愛情顯現甚好
He affects to appear well.

我辭此人因爲佢吾顧自己行爲
I dismissed the boy because he did not behave himself.

我工做唔起待至到六點鐘正做
My work will not be finished until 6 o'clock.

佢係錯了
He is mistaken.

汝係錯了
You are mistaken.

理應前者我有錯倘若吾係汝
I would have made a mistake some time ago if not for you.

我錯了
I am mistaken.

汝要拘治時候
You must restrict the time.

汝必然限定時候
You must limit the time.

汝限定時候
You must fix the time.

汝務要話定屆期
You must appoint the time.

點樣限定期
What is the limitation?

限定幾奈
How long is the limitation?

限款幾時完滿
When will the limitation expire?

冇人相伴佢不敢去
He dare not go without an escort.

我陪伴佢回家
I will escort him to his home.

佢講許多謊言想我有罪
He was intending to afflict me by telling many fibs.

返回坐落講正此語
Inflect that word rightly or go to your seat.

我是同姓兄弟
We are brothers by surname.

佢係我仝姓兄弟
He is my brother by surname.

佢醜因佢錯之事
He was mortified at his mistake.

佢傷口落藥然後正纏
His wound was mortified before they dressed it.

先生改正句書
The teacher modified the sentence.

凹與凸相對
Concave is the opposite of convex.

佢俾他地方契
He gave him a deed for the land.

佢見羞恥佢自己之惡行爲
He was ashamed of his wicked deed.

佢有一萬艮本
He had $10,000 capital.

波市頓係馬市周失市個京都
Boston is the capital of Massachusetts.

極大公議堂造在華臣頓地
The capitol building at Washington is very large.

枝鎗体見甚光
The spear looks very bright.

寫此字之人有高有瘦
The man who wrote this note was tall and thin.

多煩汝借張櫈過我
Will you be so kind as to spare me one of your chairs?

汝能背出此句話
Can you spell that word?

我想去收款
I shall go to collect my debts.

我今早去收了款
I made a collection this morning.

我体此款能收得
I think they can be collected.

我收銀見他知佢們有仁德之心
We can judge by the collection that the people are benevolent.

一大隊兵上大埠
A large company of soldiers landed in San Francisco.

講到實處佢不過係幾個
Collectively speaking, they were few.

佢係收款人
He is a collector.

正埠有收餉會所
San Francisco has a collectorship.

我想去城買些書
I wish to go to town and buy some stationery.

佢前日係賣書之人
He was once a stationer.

我來舉起此物
I shall raise this thing higher.

唐人起兵去保守自己地方
The Chinese Government are going to raise soldiers, in order to defend their country.

我來近時他起頭相望
They did raise their heads at the time when we approached to them.

我必然與他埋艮咁多得咁多
I shall make an effort to raise as much money as possible.

我今年養畜多過舊年
I shall raise more cattle this year than the last.

耕種人今年種許多麥
The farmers will raise much wheat this year.

我大中去体跑馬
We are going to the race.

人乃各國苗裔
The people of different races.

此症乃是內外症麼
Is it a physical or mental sickness?

此症內症嗎外症啞
Is it bodily sickness or mental sickness?

此板甚是粗魯
The board is rough

我住在咖欄呵爹唔（又曰客寓）
I board at the Grand Hotel.

我就用板塡 此孔
I will board up the hole soon.

搭在船上
On board the vessel.

一齊在船上
All on board.

一齊在船
All aboard.

佢在船跌落
He fell overboard.

吏部之所
Board of Civil Office.

刑部之所
Board of Punishments.

禮部之所
Board of Rites.

兵部之所
Board of War.

工部
Board of Works.

煩汝說我知此個是乜車頭
Will you please tell me what station is this?

煩汝好心話我知此個係乜車頭
Will you be kind enough to tell me what station this is?

佢有好大身分
He has a very high station.

元帥立佢兵將埋伏
The general will station his soldiers in ambush.

若他們 實完一處我能做了
I would have done so if they were stationary in one place.

我甚忙速寫此字煩汝相饒我
Please to excuse this writing, as I am in a great hurry.

煩汝恕我信內所有寫錯之字
Please to excuse all the mistakes in this letter.

煩汝恕我信內之錯字
Please to excuse all the grammatical errors in this letter.

同上句
Please to excuse all the ungrammatical expressions in this letter.

汝有乜貨出賣
What goods have you for sale?

原告推遲此案等到禮拜一
Plaintiff postponed the case until next Monday.

但那被告之人要今日審此案
But the defendant wanted his case to be tried to-day.

佢有乜口供所講
What kind of testimony did they give?

佢証人有乜好口供
Did his witness give a good evidence?

被告之人定罪做兩年苦工
The defendant's sentence was two years in State Prison.

佢在衙門審出有罪
He had been convicted in Court.

我保佢出監
I bailed him out of jail.

我講我体見之事
I testify what I show.

佢信佢口供
He believed his testimony.

我不能等汝
I cannot wait for you.

佢係我仇人
He is my enemy.

佢做錯事
He has done wrong.

此事合得汝意
Is this agreeable to you?

佢有好命運
He has a good fortune.

佢甚不遂願
He is very much disappointed.

汝朋友就來見汝了
Your friend is coming to see you.

汝幾時到此
When did you come here?

我前日見遇佢
I have seen him before.

我甚歡喜見佢
I am very glad to see him.

佢無真語
He does not tell the truth.

佢係收稅人
He is a tax-collector.

佢係收銀款人
He is a money-collector.

我收款
I collect the bills.

居在此使我甚大
It is very expensive to live in here.

因此我唔帶家眷到此
Therefore I did not bring my family here.

自然係真
Certainly, it is true.

請了我今要回家去
Good-bye; I must go home now.

汝家眷在此麼
Is your family here?

我家眷在家，先生
My family is at home, sir.

我理自己生意
I only mind my own business.

多俾些我
Give me some more.

在此等候我回
You stay here till I come back.

汝去邊處來
Where have you been?

汝應該莫咁做
You ought not to do so.

汝知真實
Are you sure of it?

夜盜昨晚被捉
A burglar was caught last night.

大賊昨晚被捉
A robber was caught last night.

佢定然俾官府查開
He will be examined by the judge.

無疑官府定佢罪
No doubt the judge will convict him.

佢定然坐長久∫
He will be imprisoned for a long time.

佢朋友欲保佢出∫
His friend tries to bail him out.

但係官府不肯俾佢保
But the judge refused to have him bailed.

因為佢罪極大
Because his crime was so great.

佢要請極好狀師保護佢身
He has to hire a very good lawyer to defend himself.

佢張案情幾時開審
When will his case be tried?

張案情下禮拜四開審
The case will be tried on Thursday next.

在邊個衙門
In what court?

佢有乜證人
Has he any withnesses?

我貨物從唐山載來
All our goods were imported from China.

我貨到埠値幾多餉銀啞
My goods have arrived; how much is their duty?

我貨從此船來在邊處車頭
My goods have come on a ship; at what wharf. does she lie?

煩汝說我知屋主叫乜名字
Please tell me what is the name of my landlord?

幾時我鋪滿期通知
Tell me when the lease of my store is expired.

我請汝車要汝包車到我處
I hire your wagon and you must guarantee to deliver the goods to the person to whom they are directed.

汝要幾多價銀包到
How much will you charge to guarantee that there?

我賃汝鋪要汝俾張樓款待我勿俾滿期了
I want to rent a store from you, but I want you to give me a lease of it that I may be sure the rent will not be raised.

倘若汝知得誰人有樓出賃通知我
Please tell me if you know of any one who has a store to let.

好呀先生汝愛乜野呀
Well, sir! what goods will you have to-day?

汝今晚中意乜野呀，先生
Well, sir! what will you like this evening?

我來因為我在寫字房應承
Oh! I came because I had no engagement at my office.

我來因為我無工夫阻我
Oh! I came because I had no avocation to occupy my time.

煩汝拈此信去書信館
Please carry this letter to the post-office for me.

多煩汝與我傳此信
Please post this letter for me.

煩汝與我付此信
Please send this letter for me.

煩汝與我傳此信
Please forward this letter for me.

多煩汝與我放此信落信箱
Please drop this letter into the box for me.

Sui Sin Far
(1867–1914)

Edith Maud Eaton was a Eurasian born of a Chinese mother and an English father. She looked white but chose to live and write as a Chinese American. She traveled back and forth across the continent, from Seattle to San Francisco to Montreal, searching for a healthier climate. Wherever she lighted, she found the Chinese Americans.

Under the name Sui Sin Far, "Water Lily" in Cantonese, Edith Eaton produced a series of stories that give us the only contemporary Chinese American portraits and impressions of Chinese American life in San Francisco, Seattle, New York, and Montreal. The Chinese and Chinamen of her stories, like herself, do not fit the Christian missionary and social Darwinist stereotypes: the intelligent and sexually repugnant sissy Chinese man and the abused, pathologically white male supremacist Chinese woman. Amid the Christian missionary cant and social Darwinist scientific rhetoric, the racist science fiction, and the low racist humor that molded the image of the Chinese and Chinamen was one writer, writing from reality instead of prejudice: Sui Sin Far.

Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian

When I look back over the years I see myself, a little child of scarcely four years of age, walking in front of my nurse, in a green English lane, and listening to her tell another of her kind that my mother is Chinese. "Oh, Lord!" exclaims the informed. She turns me around and scans me curiously from head to foot. Then the two